

Message Text

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46

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W
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R 051440Z OCT 74
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2623
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

S E C R E T AMMAN 5904

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, JO, EG, SY, IS
SUBJ: ASHRAF MARWAN'S VISIT

1. IN SHORT VISIT HERE OCTOBER 3, ACCORDING TO PRIME
MINISTER RIFAI, ASHRAF MARWAN REPEATED SUBSTANTIALLY WHAT
THEY HAD BEEN RECEIVING THROUGH EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR ABOUT
PRESIDENT SADAT'S POSITION ON JORDAN AND PLO.

2. ACCORDING TO MARWAN, AS REPORTED BY RIFAI, SADAT
WILL BE PREPARED TO STATE TO OTHER ARABS AT SUMMIT
CONFERENCE THE FOLLOWING:

(A) THAT JORDAN IS ONLY ARAB PARTY THAT CAN NEGOTIATE
WITH ISRAELIS FOR WEST BANK IN VIEW OF ISRAELI ATTITUDE;

(B) THAT WITHOUT A SETTLEMENT ON WEST BANK, THERE CAN BE NO
SETTLEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

(C) THAT JORDAN COULD VERY WELL ON ITS OWN NEGOTIATE
SUCCESSFULLY WITH ISRAELIS -- WITHOUT ARAB SUPPORT.

(D) THAT SUMMIT HAD TO MAKE UP ITS MIND WHETHER THIS WAS
MIDDLE EASTERN PROBLEM IN WHICH JORDAN HAD A ROLE TO PLAY,
OR WHETHER IT WAS A "PALESTINIAN" QUESTION IN WHICH PLO WOULD
ATTEMPT TO NEGOTIATE TO ACHIEVE RETURN OF WEST BANK. IN

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LATTER CASE, SUMMIT WOULD BE CONDEMNING WEST BANK TO

PERPETUATION OF ISRAELI MILITARY OCCUPATION SINCE ISRAELIS
WILL NOT DEAL WITH PLO.

3. RIFAI SAID HE TOLD MARWAN THAT JORDANIANS HAD HEARD ALL
THIS BEFORE AND HAD ASKED WHAT MADE MARWAN BELIEVE THAT JORDAN
NOW WOULD TRUST EGYPTIANS. MARWAN SAID IN REPLY HE UNDERSTOOD
WHY JORDANIANS WERE SAYING THIS, BUT PROOF WOULD COME AT ARAB
SUMMIT IN RABAT WHERE SADAT WAS PREPARED TO TAKE THIS LINE.

4. RIFAI REMARKED THAT EXCHANGE WERE EXTREMELY FRANK AND THAT
JORDANIANS WERE VERY MUCH IN A MOOD OF DISTRUSTING MESSAGES WHICH
EGYPTIANS WERE SENDING.

5. ON SYRIA, IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION FROM ME, RIFAI SAID
MARWAN INDICATED THAT EGYPTIANS WERE MOST UNHAPPY WITH THE
WAY KHADDAM HAD BRIEFED JORDANIANS ON TRIPARTITE MEETING
ON SEPTEMBER 20-21. NEVERTHELESS, JORDAN BELIEVED THAT
WHILE SYRIA MIGHT TAKE A MORE FORWARD PRO-PLO POSITION,
THEY STILL ALSO RECOGNIZED THE REALITIES WITH REGARD
TO JORDANIAN POSITION ON NEGOTIATIONS FOR WEST BANK AND
WERE IN THAT RESPECT IN A NOT TOO FAR DIFFERENT POSITION FROM
THAT WHICH SADAT CONVEYED TO JORDAN THROUGH MARWAN.

6. RIFAI SAID HE THOUGHT THAT FROM WHAT MARWAN HAD TO SAY
SAUDIS ALSO SHARED EGYPTIAN ANALYSIS, BUT BOTH HE AND MARWAN
AGREED THAT BIGGEST PROBLEM WAS TO GET SAUDIS TO SPEAK OUT.

7. MARWAN ALSO REPORTED THAT BOTH EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA
HAD SENT EMISSARIES TO BOUMEDIENE. WHILE ALGERIANS WERE
STILL BEING TOUGH, MARWAN REPORTED THAT EGYPTIANS BELIEVE
THEY HAD MADE SOME PROGRESS IN CONVINCING ALGERIANS OF NEED
TO BE FLEXIBLE ENOUGH TO KEEP JORDAN INVOLVED.

8. RIFAI ENDED OUR DISCUSSION BY REPEATING KING'S DETERMINATION
TO GO TO RABAT AND SEEK SOME DEFINITIVE STATEMENT OF VIEWS OF
OTHER ARABS. HE RECOGNIZES THAT THIS IS LIKELY TO BE AN EXTR-
EMELY DIFFICULT PROCESS AND GIVEN VARYING AND AMBIVALENT
ARAB ATTITUDES TOWARD THE ISSUES, A CLEAR-CUT ARAB RESPONSE
ON JORDAN AND PLO IS PROBABLY UNLIKELY TO EMERGE, NO MATTER
HOW HARD JORDAN TRIES. IN LAST ANALYSIS JORDANIANS ARE
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LEFT WITH THREAT THAT CONTINUING FUZZINESS IS
TENTAMOUNT TO A REJECTION OF THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES TO
NEGOTIATE FOR THE WEST BANK AND THEREFORE THEY WOULD THEN
OPT OUT. WHILE THEY SEEM DETERMINED ON THIS COURSE NOW, SOME
TIME REMAINS BEFORE THE SUMMIT AND IT IS NOT IMPOSSIBLE THAT
THEIR ATTITUDE CAN BE CHANGED, PARTICULARLY IF EGYPT CONTINUES
TO WORK ON KEEPING JORDAN INVOLVED.
PICKERING

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: WEST BANK, MEETING DELEGATIONS, PEACE PLANS, SUMMIT MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 OCT 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CollinP0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974AMMAN05904
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740283-0057
From: AMMAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741069/aaaachbo.tel
Line Count: 115
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CollinP0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 AUG 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14-Aug-2002 by worrelsw>; APPROVED <11 MAR 2003 by CollinP0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ASHRAF MARWAN'S VISIT
TAGS: PFOR, JO, EG, SY, IS, PLO, (MARWAN, ASHRAF)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005